

March 7, 2007

Brian Smith Written Testimony in Opposition to HB804

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

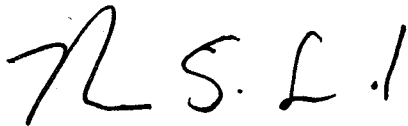
For the record my name is Brian Smith. I am the owner of a small business here in Downtown Helena. Because of business obligations, I am not able to testify in person today.

I want to go on record as opposing HB804 as it currently reads. My opposition is primarily due to the removal of funding for the Department of Revenue to enforce tax collections from out-of-state entities who are not paying their taxes.

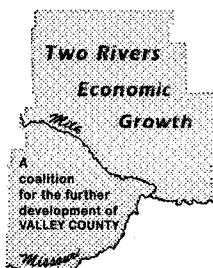
I don't mind paying my taxes because our government services are crucial to do business in this great State. However, I do get angry when other people don't pay their taxes. When that happens it just means that the rest of us have to pay more to provide the same level of services. By not funding the Department of Revenue to enforce our tax code on out-of-state entities, you are essentially giving businesses and people in other states an advantage over our own citizens.

Please restore this critical funding to the Department of Revenue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. S. L. I'.

Brian Smith  
Managing Partner  
Blackfoot River Brewing Company, LLC  
Helena, Montana 59601



74 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Glasgow, MT 59230  
406-228-3937  
406-228-8793 fax

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March 5, 2007

House Appropriations Committee  
Members of the House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620

As an organization actively involved in economic development in Montana, I want to express my concern for the actions that have been taken within the House Appropriations Committee that negatively impact the economic development capability of the State of Montana.

The Governor's Office of Economic Development, in coordination with a number of state departments, especially the Montana Department of Commerce, is an integral part of the economic development activities at the local level throughout the state of Montana. We have had the opportunity to work with both the Governor's Office of Economic Development and the Department of Commerce and find their efforts to be professional and very effective.

The budget recommendations submitted to the Legislature by the Governor of Montana have my support and that of others in the economic development community. Reductions in the appropriations submitted in House Bill 2 will be harmful to the economic development activities of the State and its local areas. We depend upon a strong State level effort to help us be successful at the local level. Economic development is about partnerships and stripping away capacity at any level will cause serious loss of effective economic development.

We are particularly concerned about the reduction in the Governor's Office of Economic Development which reduces the amount of funding for marketing Montana in business recruitment by 94% from that submitted in the original House Bill 2. The combination of direct marketing money reductions and the impact of the reduction of one FTE from the office result in House Bill 804 financing only 6% of the previous amount.

We cannot support the reduced spending levels built into House Bill 804 when it comes to economic development and Montana's future. We urge the committee and, if necessary, the members on the floor of the House of Representatives to resurrect the funding embodied in the original House Bill 2 by the Governor.

Only by doing that can we insure that the active and effective partnership economic growth that currently exists will remain productive for the good of the citizens of the state and its communities.

Sincerely,

EXHIBIT  
DATE  
HB 804